(iii) non-transfer of technology, even though contracted and paid for.

For the same reasons, the Government has also requested the Central Vigilance Commission for instituting a probe by the CBI or any other appropriate agency into the following allegations:

(i) involvement of agents / middlemen in major Defence deals after imposition of ban on involvement of agents,

(ii) allegations made during the course of Short Duration Discussion in the Rajya Sabha on 23rd December 1999 regarding irregularities in Defence procurements, and

(iii) allegations made in the writ petition filed by a serving Rear Admiral in the Delhi High Court.

CBI Enquiry against Naval Officer

604. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to Refer to Unstarred Question No. 798 answered in Rajya Sabha on 3rd March, 1999 and state:

(a) whether CBI was enquiring into the complaints against a Rear Admiral since the NHQ was not forthcoming in helping Government to investigate the complaints;

(b) whether it is a fact, that a Committee of the Defence Ministry formed at the instance of the RM had made relevant enquiries on 18th May, 1998 and 4th June, 1998 and cleared the RADM; and

(c) if so, the details and the reasons for commissioning the CBI?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) In reply to the Unstarred Question No.798 to Rajya Sabbha on 3.3.1999 it had been stated that the Ministry of Defence had referred the matter for CBI enquiry. This reference to the CBI had been made on 4.3.1998.

On 4.5.1998, a Committee of Officers was constituted by the Raksha Mantri consisting of the representatives of Ministry of Defence (Finance) and of Naval HQrs. The Committee held two meetings on 15.5.1998 and 4.6.1998. The Committee came to the conclusion that the allegations against the officer could not be established from the files. The Committee also noted that there were some allegations which did not lend themselves to being proved or disproved, from a perusal of the files.

These allegations referred to commission being paid and involvement of the officer's family in private firms. On examination of the Committee's recommendations, it was decided that the allegation which could not be extablished from a persual of the files would be specifically referred to the CBI.

Accordingly, on 2.7.1998, the CBI was requested by the Ministry of Defence to specially enquiry into the following two issues:—

(a) whether commissions are being paid to certain private companies in the matter of Naval procurement, and

(b) whether the officer or any of his family member has any interest of any nature in any of the specified firms with whom Navy has been dealing.

The CBI has since furnished its report, which is under examination.

The officer has filed a Writ Petition before the Delhi High Court and the case is listed for hearing on 27.4.2000.

Defence Budget

†605. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the news item captioned "Bharat ka raksha Khorch atyadhik kam: Amertica published in Dainik Jagaran dated 2nd February, 2000;

(b) the amount earmarked towards defence expenditure in the General Budget for the year 1998-99;

(c) whether India propose to increase its defence budget keeping in view the bitter relations with Pakistan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In 1998-99 (RE), a provision of Rs.41,200 crores was made for Defence Expenditure.

(c) and (d) The allocation to the Defence Services is made keeping in view their obligatory charges, essential maintenance needs, committed liabilities, on going schemes/programmes and prioritised new schemes.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.